



# **Seattle Human Rights Commission**

Established 1963

## **Resolution #12-03: Support for House Passage of Senate VAWA bill**

**Whereas**, all Seattle residents are born free and equal in dignity and rights; and

**Whereas**, the Seattle Human Rights Commission is committed to protecting and advocating for justice, human rights, and the equal treatment of all people who live and work in Seattle; and

**Whereas**, the protection against violence is a fundamental human right,

**Whereas**, reauthorization of the Violence Against Women Act (VAWA) has stalled in Congress; and

**Whereas**, the Senate version of VAWA includes important protections for groups particularly affected by violence against women, as Native Americans, immigrants and refugees, and LGBTQ communities while the House version of VAWA does not; and

**Whereas**, the Senate version of VAWA more fully embodies the core human rights of equality, safety, liberty, integrity and dignity which are enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW), the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the American Declaration on Human Rights among others;

**Whereas**, the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Violence Against Women has urged the U.S. to reassess its laws and policies protecting domestic violence survivors and punishing abusers; and

**Whereas**, in 2011 the Inter-American Commission of Human Rights (ICHR) already required the United States to comply with its international duty to prevent violence against women in the case of *Jessica Lenahan (González) v. the United States*, through the enactment of legislation and policy reforms that do not discriminate and provide for equal protection before the law to victims of domestic violence and their children, under Article II of the American Declaration on Human Rights; and

**Whereas**, the Commission supports the Seattle Women's Commission's call for the U.S. House to pass the Senate version of VAWA and the Commission co-sponsored a public rally with the Seattle Women's Commission to support the Senate version of VAWA on June 27, 2012;

**Therefore be it resolved**, that the Seattle Human Rights Commission hereby declares its support for the U.S. Senate version of VAWA and calls upon the U.S. House of Representatives to pass the Senate version this year, in compliance with its international obligations to enact legislation that does not discriminate and to respect and ensure the right to be protected against violence.

Adopted by the Seattle Human Rights Commission on September 6, 2012

Christopher Stearns, Chairman

Nika Dahlbaka, Secretary